

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

MINUTES OF THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON  
EXPLOITATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE PUBLICATIONS

15 April 1960

Members: Mr. Max Horlick, State  
Mr. Sidney Friedland, State  
Mr. Gerald Cooney, Army  
Mr. P. Thomas Koines, Navy  
Maj. Elias Bacha, Air Force

[redacted]  
Mr. J. J. BESTELL, Chairman, CIA

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Guests:

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[redacted]

1. Minutes

The statement concerning interest in Data on Industrial Plants in Communist China, page 3 of the minutes of the twentieth meeting, was amended to read: "Interest in this report was primarily shown by NSA and CIA."

2. Western World Program

Committee comment on the current program was generally favorable. There were recommendations for additional subject matter coverage and a concern for timeliness expressed in the case of individual reports. Thus, State, NSA, and CIA felt that the time-lag between events and the published report of events limited the usefulness of the two reports on Africa, as well as the report on Arab States and Israel.

Navy expressed satisfaction with the scope and content of the program as currently constituted. Air Force singled out the International Communist Developments report, East-West and Intra-Orbit Travel and Contacts, Activities in the Arctic and Antarctic, and the Consolidated Translation Survey as the most useful publications of the program. NSA expressed interest in all reports comprising the program, with the exception of International Communist Developments. The Consolidated Translation Survey with its Author Index was universally appreciated.

NAVY review(s) completed.

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State Department review completed

Seen by [signature] 28 APR

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On the proposal to merge the two reports on Africa, Navy recommended against, while State reported its South Africa desk opposed and its North Africa desk concurring. NSA and CIA offered no objections to the proposal.

The Chairman stated that the proposal resulted from manpower adjustments designed to center the total FDD reporting program on the internal and external activities of Soviet Orbit countries. He also reported a growing conviction that FDD might better serve the needs of the intelligence community by adapting its schedule and scope of reporting to support specific intelligence projects, planned or in progress, instead of producing periodic across-the-board compilations of intelligence information. Further refinement of FDD reports to meet specific requirements is currently under study.

Comments relating to individual reports of the program follow.

a. State described the Information Report on Arab States and Israel as a valuable supplement to embassy reporting, particularly in regard to the sociological data provided. The political coverage of the report, however, is not sufficiently current to meet State requirements. Although the biographic data on military personalities is often useful, other military information contained in the report is too specialized to be of interest to State analysts.

In economic reporting, topical follow-up and coherence were desired wherever feasible, e.g., progress reports on the construction of an installation.

CIA considered the report a good source of biographic information, and particularly informative on groups and peoples, such as the Kurds. Reporting on the economic penetration efforts of Bloc countries generally, and on Soviet mapping activities in Syria specifically was requested.

b. The Information on North Africa report is regarded as a useful source of background information by State analysts. Here also the predominant interest is in the sociological data provided; more voluminous reporting of such data, as available, would be appreciated. Occasionally, political information on areas remote from U. S. missions is useful.

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CIA requested inclusion of all available information on ChiCom aid to Algeria and Libya. Interest was expressed in reports concerning the exploitation of petroleum resources and guerilla operations against pipelines. Information indicating Bloc interest in the economic planning and development of North African countries was also desired.

c. Information on Africa South of the Sahara was likewise designated by State as a useful report, productive of primary as well as secondary information, and supplementing embassy coverage of the area. Information deriving from French and Portuguese publications was considered especially good. The economic section was regarded as the best part of the report.

CIA requested information, as available, on the policies and political influence of European business firms having concessions in the area.

d. State analysts receiving the International Communist Developments report appreciate and use it. No modifications are suggested.

e. State member reported that the East-West and Intra-Orbit Travel and Contacts publication was being read with considerable interest by analysts concerned with sociological data. It was felt that some of the less significant items could be eliminated without impairing the usefulness of the report. The considerable improvement in timeliness of reporting was commended.

CIA commented favorably on the report's coverage of Soviet activities in Syria.

f. Navy and CIA expressed particular interest in the Activities in the Arctic and Antarctic report, especially with regard to information provided on operations in the Antarctic. State commented on the background value of the report, but found much of the scientific data too detailed for use.

g. State and CIA were much pleased with the coverage of CEMA and intra-Bloc trade activities provided by the External Economic Relations of Bloc Countries report. A request was made for inclusion of information on the extension of Bloc communications services and civil air routes into peripheral areas, and also of indications of Soviet interest in copper and tin deposits.

State member requested to be informed of articles, which might appear in the peripheral press, concerning financial claims arising out of the nationalization by Satellite countries of Swedish, Dutch, and French properties.

He also queried the possibility of resuming the indexing of "Le Monde" and "La Stampa," noting that USIA in addition to State needs these indexes. The Chairman said the indexes would be reinstated in the program.

3. The review of area programs having been concluded with this meeting, the Chairman proposed that the Committee recess until September. He also suggested that in the future the Committee might find it advantageous to review the FDD [ ] programs jointly, rather than separately, thus having the total program for an area available for evaluation and making the determination of priorities an easier procedure. The Committee accepted this proposal and elected to review the USSR Scientific and Technical program at the next meeting, to occur 9 September 1960.

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The meeting adjourned at 1530 hours.

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Secretary